

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for noting that claims 6 and 14 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants have respectfully chosen to maintain claims 6 and 14 in their original dependant form in light of the following remarks.

Claims 1-4, 7-12 and 16 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(e) on Katayama (U.S. Patent No. 6,594,206). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite, “a 3-beam generating diffraction grating to diffract the laser light, which is emitted from the semiconductor laser and diffracted by the diffracting section, into zero-order light, positive first-order light and negative first-order light and having no polarization property, wherein a diffraction angle of the diffracting section differs from a diffraction angle of the 3-beam generating diffraction grating” as disclosed at least in paragraphs [0070], [0074], [0083] and [0084] of applicants’ specification. Katayama does not disclose such a feature.

As shown in Figures 5, 15 and 19, Katayama does not disclose or suggest a diffraction section as recited in claim 1. Instead, Katayama discloses only a “diffraction optical device 3” which is used to divide a collimated laser beam “into three parts, for example, 0-order light, +1-order diffracted light, -1-order diffracted light.”

In applicants’ invention, light reflected by an object (such as optical disk 6) passes through the 3-beam diffraction grating 2, and is then made incident on the diffraction section 15 where it is diffracted away from the direction of the semiconductor laser 8. Accordingly, the return light is prevented from returning to the semiconductor laser 8 and is therefore prevented from interfering with the laser light being emitted, thereby reducing optical noise due to return light. Even if a portion of the return light does reach the end surface 11a of the header section 11 on which the semiconductor laser 8 is mounted and is again made incident on the diffraction section 15, the light is diffracted to deviate away from the direction of the object 6 due to the difference in the diffraction angles of the diffraction section 15 and the 3-beam diffraction grating 2 (as recited in

claim 1), therefore reducing interference due to return light. Katayama does not disclose or suggest such a feature.

Accordingly, because Katayama fails to disclose or suggest all of the features recited in claim 1, claim 1 is allowable. Claims 2-4, 7-12 and 16 depend from allowable claim 1 and are therefore allowable due at least to their respective dependencies.

Claims 5, 13 and 15 stand variously rejected under 35 USC 103(a) on Katayama in view of Tajiri (U.S. Patent No. 5,727,009), Yamazaki (U.S. Patent No. 5,608,695) and Yanagawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,925,039). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

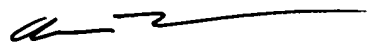
Neither Tajiri, Yamazaki nor Yanagawa overcomes the deficiencies of Katayama discussed above, nor has the Examiner cited them as doing so. Accordingly, claims 3, 13 and 15, which depend from allowable claim 1, are allowable over the cited art due at least to their respective dependencies.

Applicants solicit an early action allowing the claims.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicants petition for any required relief, including extensions of time, and authorize the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing Attorney Docket No. 204552029500.

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